



Appl. No. 10/644,936
Reply dated October 24, 2006
Response to Office Action Mailed July 24, 2006

Docket No. NIT-391

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. - 25. (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A computer system comprising:

a first computer storing one or more first programs;

a second computer coupled to said first computer via a network and storing a second program; and

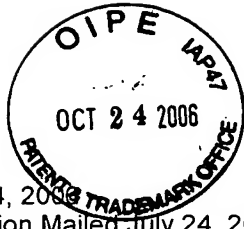
a third computer coupled to said first computer via the network, said second computer and said second program not being disclosed to said third computer;

wherein said first computer:

stores association information related to an association between said one or more first programs and said second program,

receives, from said third computer, a first request for executing said one or more first programs,

determines whether or not said one or more first programs correspond to said second program ~~or not~~ on the basis of said association,



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sends a second request to said second program when said one or more first programs correspond to said second program,
receives results of said second request from said second program, and
sends the results to said third computer in response to said first request; and

wherein said second computer receives said second request, executes said second program and sends execution results as said results of said second request to said first computer without disclosure to the third computer of said second computer or said second program.

27. (Previously Presented) A computer system according to claim 26, further comprising:

a fourth computer coupled to said first computer, said second computer, and said third computer via the network, wherein:

said fourth computer collects a plurality of location information related to locations where said one or more first programs or said second program are stored, stores said plurality of location information with both said one or more first programs and said second program, and generates said association information.

28. (Previously Presented) A computer system according to claim 27, wherein

said association information is a hierarchy information indicating whether said one or more first programs are of a higher level than said second program associated with said one or more first programs.

29. (Previously Presented) A computer system according to claim 28, wherein said fourth computer determines which program of said first or second programs is of a higher level than its associated program on the basis of said hierarchy information, and sends, to said third computer, a location of the program which is a higher level than its associated program.

30. (Previously Presented) A computer system according to claim 29, wherein said one or more first programs and said associated second program are executed as programs related to a common function.

31. (Currently Amended) A first computer comprising:
a network interface to be coupled to a second computer and a third computer via a network, said second computer not being disclosed to said third computer;
a processor coupled to said network interface;
a memory coupled to said processor;
wherein said memory stores a plurality of first programs which is a target of a request from the third computer and said memory further stores association

information regarding said first programs and a second program which is stored in said second computer,

wherein said processor receives, via said network interface, a request from said third computer for executing one of said first programs, refers to said association information to determine whether said first program as a target to be executed is associated with said second program, when said first program as a target to be executed is associated with said second program, said processor sends to said second computer via said network interface, an instruction for executing said second program in said second computer, receives results of said instruction via said network interface via the network, and sends, to said third computer, a reply of said request including said results of instruction, said second computer and said second program remaining undisclosed to said third computer.

32. (Previously Presented) A first computer according to claim 31, wherein said association information includes a hierarchy information indicating whether said first program is of a higher level than said associated second program.

33. (Previously Presented) A first computer according to claim 27, wherein said first program and said second program associated with said first program are executed as programs related to a common function.

34. (Currently Amended) A program management apparatus comprising:

a network to be coupled to a first processor able to ~~executed~~ execute a first program, said network being coupled to a second processor able to execute a second program and to a third processor;

a fourth processor to be coupled to said network; and

a memory to be coupled to said fourth processor,

wherein said fourth processor:

determines an association between said first program and said second program,

stores, to said memory, an association information indicating the association between said first program and said second program,

receives an inquiry of a location where one of said first or second programs is executed from said third processor via said network,

determines which location of execution of said first program or said associated second program is to be sent, and

sends, back to said third processor, via said network, said determined location of execution of said first or second program.

35. (Previously Presented) A program management apparatus according to claim 34, wherein

said association information includes a hierarchy information indicating that one of said first or second programs is of a higher level than the other said first or second program.

36. (Previously Presented) A program management apparatus according to claim 35, wherein

said first program and said second program associated with said first program are executed as programs related to a common function.

37. (Previously Presented) A program management apparatus according to claim 36, wherein

said fourth processor determines which program of said first program or said second program is of a higher level on the basis of said hierarchy information, and sends the location of the program determined to be of a higher level.